

Mayor's Report
Tuesday, January 6, 2015
Deborah G. Owens

As we embark on a new year, citizens will see new initiatives, as well as improvements to current processes which may affect citizen lives or how businesses are able to establish and grow within our city. For example, City Manager Fleury, in an effort to be proactive and in response to concerns having been raised by both citizens and Commissioners, has been reviewing processes within the city's Inspection Division. These have included not only meeting with individuals, but meeting with staff, reviewing processes and visiting other cities for "best practices." After these reviews and meetings, a date of January 14 has been established for a community conversation on the procedures and services of the Building Inspection Division, to openly discuss areas where we may be doing well, as well as areas of concern. This meeting will allow not only those who regularly interact with the Inspection Division, such as contractors, sub-contractors and developers on how to help those businesses be successful, but residents who, from time to time, apply for building permits or other issues which could relate to electrical, mechanical, or plumbing. The meeting will be held at 7:30 a.m. in the Burnham Brook Community Center. Other opportunities will also be forthcoming for those who may not be able to make this timeframe. The city will be notified through our communications specialist in the form of press releases and notification will be posted on the city's website.

As a member of the Search Committee for the new CEO for Battle Creek Unlimited, we have interviewed and hired a consultant who, under our specific instructions, is assisting with that process. The committee is currently determining the core competencies for the job while taking a serious look at what a top-notch economic development practitioner truly looks like and considering our established Industrial Park. Input on the development of the profile from stakeholders will commence the week of January 11th along with the distribution of surveys. It is the committee's hope to complete the process so that the new CEO can be in place and play a role with the Transition Committee in determining the future strategic plan and goals for Battle Creek Unlimited.

The State of Michigan is competing for an Air National Guard cyber forces mission at W.K. Kellogg Air National Guard Base in Battle Creek. The Director of the Air National Guard is expected to announce the final four units to be assigned cyber missions when the President's FY16 budget request is sent to Congress on Feb. 2. If we are successful, the 74-person team would support the U.S. Air Force Hunter Interceptor Mission with 39 people assigned to a Cyber Protection Team supporting U.S. Cyber Command. The Air National Guard is working on building a total of 12 Cyber Protection Teams and six National Mission Teams as part of the overall Cyber Mission Force. The goal is to meet a requirement of having two Cyber Protection Teams and one National Mission Team always available to meet daily cyber mission requirements. Since June, we have been engaged directly with the leadership of the Air National Guard and

USCYBERCOM and coordinated with the governor's staff in pursuit of this mission. We believe Michigan will be selected as one of the four remaining teams.

Fort Custer Training Center of the Michigan Army National Guard is among the contenders for an "East Coast Ground Based Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Defense System," a project that proposes \$700 million in local construction, 250 jobs, and a total regional economic impact of \$3.2 billion. The project is currently in the Economic Impact Statement phase for sites in Maine, New York, Ohio and Michigan; expectations are that the EIS process will continue for another 12 to 14 months until it is completed. The Defense Authorization Act Bill for FY 2015 did not include funding for the U.S. Missile Defense Agency to continue the investigative and examination process, including a cost benefit analysis, to select a final site. Funding is expected to be restored for FY 2016.

At a meeting on Dec. 10 in Ann Arbor, BCU representatives Jim Hettinger, Joe Schwarz, Jan Frantz and the Roosevelt Group met with Gov. Rick Snyder, Major Gen. Gregory Vadnais and staff. With the intent to more fully engage the State of Michigan in state-wide efforts to retain and expand the Department of Defense presence in Michigan, an outcome of the meeting was an offer from Gov. Snyder to provide state funding for maintenance and rehabilitation on the approximately 2,700 feet of Battle Creek's 10,003 lineal foot runway not covered by other state or federal funding in the amount of \$819,667.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah G. Owens

Deborah G. Owens, Mayor